

House Ways and Means Committee  
Representative Rena Moran  
449 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St Paul, MN 55155



April 23, 2021

Dear Chair Moran and Committee Members,

Homes for All is a coalition of 270+ organizations that reaches every corner of the state and represents non-profits, direct service providers, faith communities, housing & shelter providers, the private sector, local municipalities, and philanthropic organizations - all working in unison to amplify the housing needs at the Capitol of households statewide.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the lives of Minnesotans, the Homes for All Coalition's top priority is ensuring stability for Minnesota households and our housing market. This is why we have been continuously advocating for shelter support, rental assistance, homeowner assistance and the eviction suspension since the start of the pandemic more than a year ago. As the Minnesota Legislature contemplates an eviction moratorium off-ramp, we want to highlight several strengths of House File 12:

- **Continues to protect renters during this peacetime emergency and possible future emergencies:** Homes for All believes in helping renters remain safe in their own homes during the peacetime emergency. Minnesota's protection of renters has prevented the spread of COVID-19 by minimizing doubling-up and homelessness. It has also saved lives. [Research out of UCLA estimates](#) that Minnesota's eviction suspension reduced the number of potential COVID-19 cases by 22,200 and saved 680 lives between March and September 2020. This data does not include the past 7 months during which states saw dramatic increases in infections and deaths, so it is reasonable to estimate a much larger impact. This bill recognizes that the emergency may need to continue, while preparing appropriately for the inevitable conclusion of the emergency.
- **Avoids needless eviction filings against households whose overdue rent can be paid through emergency rental assistance programs:** The influx of almost \$675 million in federal emergency rental assistance provides an opportunity to make both landlords and tenants whole. House File 12 protects tenants from eviction filings for non-payment of rent while they seek rental assistance available through RentHelpMN.org and elsewhere.
- **Provides adequate timelines and notice requirements that will ensure all parties understand what is owed before evictions proceed:** Most people do not follow the state legislative process closely enough or read/watch the news to know when the eviction moratorium will end and an "off-ramp" begins, much less what that "off-ramp" entails. This bill's timeline and notice requirement address this head-on by providing a clear warning for a tenant to understand when an eviction action may be filed against them if rent remains unpaid. Given the lengthy period of possible disputed rent (e.g., partial payments, late fees, utilities, etc. over 14+ months), a monthly accounting of the exact amount of rent overdue is essential for tenants, landlords, rental assistance providers, and the courts. This helps the tenant apply for emergency rental assistance through RentHelpMN.org (which requires documented amounts/ledgers from the landlord) so tenants can remain in their home, landlords are made whole, and complicated accounting questions are not tying up the courts.

We know that where we live impacts everything. Home is where children learn, workers earn and how communities thrive. The Homes for All coalition is available to regularly engage in conversations about an effective path forward to ensure stability for all. For any additional information to help inform your policy decisions. Please reach out to the policy co-chairs, Michael Dahl (651-336-5902), Kari Johnson (612-387-6398), or Zack Eichten (651-829-0888) should you need any further information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Pastor Sue Koesterman & Chad Adams  
Homes for All Co-Chairs